



Columbus Blue Jackets Media Clips November 8th to 10th, 2025

Columbus Blue Jackets News

- PAGE 2 The Athletic / Blue Jackets Monday Gathering: Brrrrr. An offensive chill lingers for too many players
- PAGE 8 The Athletic / Blue Jackets fall to Canucks despite big nights from Kirill Marchenko, Dmitri Voronkov
- PAGE 11 The Athletic / Blue Jackets' first month brings streak and a learning curve: Thoughts, critiques and more
- PAGE 14 The Columbus Dispatch / Mistakes costly for Columbus Blue Jackets in loss to Vancouver Canucks: Takeaways
- PAGE 17 The Columbus Dispatch / Columbus Blue Jackets drop third straight game on late stumble against Vancouver Canucks

Cleveland Monsters / Prospects News

- PAGE 18 Cleveland.com/ Blue Jackets recall center from Monsters, place veteran defenseman on IR

NHL News

Multimedia

- [WATCH](#) Fox61 / Columbus Blue Jackets Doomed By Bad Start; Injuries Piling Up
- [WATCH](#) WSYX / Columbus Blue Jackets team up to fight cancer

The Athletic / Blue Jackets Monday Gathering: Brrrrr. An offensive chill lingers for too many players

By Aaron Portzline November 10, 2025

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A collection of notes, insights, ruminations and did-you-knows gathered throughout the week that was for the Columbus Blue Jackets:

Item No. 1: Level 1 emergency

Many parts of Ohio were expecting their first measurable snowfall of the winter, with as much as 5-10 inches possible overnight Sunday into Monday, especially in the northern reaches by Toledo and Cleveland.

As for the state's NHL club ... well, they've been in a frost for a while now.

Forwards Kirill Marchenko (eight goals), Dmitri Voronkov (seven) and Miles Wood (four goals in only eight games), plus defenseman Zach Werenski (four) have carried the Blue Jackets through the first month of the season.

But the balanced, coming-from-everywhere offense the Blue Jackets enjoyed last season — no NHL club had more 15-goal scorers than Columbus' eight — has been missing in action so far in 2025-26.

The Blue Jackets are 7-7-0 and riding a three-game losing streak heading into Monday's game against the Edmonton Oilers at Rogers Place.

But how soon can they expect to snap this losing streak, or hover around .500, with so few players carrying the offensive load?

Consider:

- Center Adam Fantilli, who had 31 goals last season, has just two this season, including an ongoing eight-game stretch with no goals and a minus-7 rating.
- Winger Boone Jenner, who has just two goals, has also gone eight games without a goal. The captain is minus-6 in that span and was dropped to the fourth line for Saturday's game in Vancouver.
- Center Sean Monahan has just one goal in 14 games. He had six at this point last season.
- Winger Kent Johnson, who has scored only two goals, has gone six games without a point and has a minus-8 rating in that span.
- Winger Mathieu Olivier, who broke out with 18 goals last season, has just one goal. Other than a 1-3-4 game vs. Toronto (Oct. 29), he has only one assist all season.

Blue Jackets coach Dean Evason has shuffled his lines more times than he would have liked, and his charges have responded each time with a renewed sense of jump. But the results haven't followed.

It was hard to find fault with the Blue Jackets' work ethic or energy on Saturday, and they created 19 scoring chances and 13 high-danger scoring chances, per Natural Stat Trick.

But only Marchenko (two goals) and Voronkov (one) could get a puck past Canucks goaltender Kevin Lankinen. That's been the story of the season: Marchenko and Voronkov have combined for 14 goals. All other Columbus forwards combined? 18.

One of the defining images of Saturday's game was Fantilli, one of the most snakebitten players in the NHL so far this season, slamming his stick on the ice and shouting choice words on his way back to the Blue Jackets bench after missing a golden chance off his backhand during the second period.

"You wish you could pinpoint why you're not scoring," Blue Jackets GM Don Waddell told *The Athletic*. "We're getting lots of opportunities and that makes it frustrating. If you weren't getting the chances, you'd be more concerned. We're getting them, we're just not burying them."

When Waddell was hired last summer, he was initially concerned about the roster's ability to score. But the Blue Jackets surprised last season in many ways, not least their firepower. They finished seventh in the league with a franchise-record 267 goals scored.

Waddell spent all morning Sunday, he said, digging into these current struggles. He was looking for something specific that could explain where the Blue Jackets' scoring touch has gone.

The only answer, he said, is to be patient.

"You just have to believe that these guys — the Fantillis, the Johnsons, the Monahans — they're going to score more goals eventually," Waddell said. "We can't expect Marchy and Voronkov and Z to score every game. It's not like we're asking a guy who scored five goals last season to score 15. These guys all have a history of being able to score."

"We've seen it over the years — when guys go through a stretch where they don't score, the stick gets held a little tighter. They start worrying about getting the shot off quicker instead of just getting the right shot."

Waddell watched Michigan State and Penn State play on Friday, then arrived in Toronto on Saturday to watch Boston's 5-3 win over the Maple Leafs. He's in town early ahead of this week's GM meetings.

Most of these GMs have already had conversations with Waddell, who has been listening to offers for disgruntled winger Yegor Chinakhov for weeks now. Chinakhov, other than a few shifts, has been unable to crack the Blue Jackets' top two lines. But Waddell said he isn't moving him for "futures" — prospects and draft picks — and he's not getting offers for immediate help.

Waddell's belief that the Blue Jackets are going to wake up offensively very soon makes him no more desperate to swing a trade, he said, than he was a couple of weeks ago.

“I’ve said to a few guys on this trip that we’re not going to do anything unless somebody blows us away,” Waddell said. “And I don’t see that happening.”

The Blue Jackets canceled practice on Sunday in Edmonton, opting instead to rest up for what figures to be a heck of a test today. The Oilers were routed 9-1 at home by Colorado on Saturday, so they should be loaded for bear.

There couldn’t be a better time for the Blue Jackets to get some bounces, finish some chances and give themselves a reasonable margin for error.

Item No. 2: Smith in limbo

NHL veteran forward Milan Lucic signed a professional tryout contract with the St. Louis Blues’ AHL affiliate last week. The news reached AHL Cleveland defenseman Brendan Smith quicker than most.

Smith’s agent, Matt Oakes, texted him almost immediately. “You’re OK,” the text read. “You’re not the oldest.” There may have been a “ha ha” or a “smiling/crying emoji” included.

Smith, who turns 37 years old in February, had been the oldest player in the AHL this season until Lucic, who will be 38 in June, joined the Springfield (Mass.) Thunderbirds.

Actually, Smith doesn’t give a damn about his age or the tread that may have come off his tires during a 726-game NHL career with the Detroit Red Wings, New York Rangers, Carolina Hurricanes, New Jersey Devils and Dallas Stars.

If he didn’t firmly believe that he still has the ability to help an NHL club, he said, he wouldn’t have spent the last month playing for the Cleveland Monsters. He also wouldn’t have spent all of those hours driving from Cleveland to Columbus (two hours each direction) between games and practices to keep his family intact and coach his 7-year-old’s hockey team.

“Any time you’re on the ice, it’s for the love of the game,” Smith told *The Athletic*. “It doesn’t matter where I am, really. Any chance to play is a gift. I’m older, but I still believe that I can play in the NHL, and that’s my goal.”

Smith came to training camp on an NHL PTO with the Blue Jackets, but wasn’t able to grab a roster spot. Unlike a year ago, the Blue Jackets weren’t beset by injuries during training camp and the preseason, so the roster choices held zero drama.

By the time final cuts were made, Smith and his wife and family were fairly settled in Columbus, and he and his son were already engaged with Battery Hockey, the program founded by former Blue Jackets forward Cam Atkinson. Smith is coaching with Derek Dorsett, Brandon Dubinsky and other former NHLers.

Once the NHL season was underway and no other teams had stepped forward, Smith signed a PTO with AHL Cleveland. The agreement is for 25 games, which means Smith could be playing for the Monsters well into the season. (They’ve played only seven games, the fewest in the AHL).

"I was thinking something would have happened by now, but we'll keep rolling with it, I guess ... until I won't," Smith said. "And at that time, (Cleveland coach Trent) Vogelhuber wants to have a conversation, same with management in Columbus and my agent.

"That moment isn't today. But it's rearing its head, I'd say. The commute is hard."

For instance, Smith bolted out of Cleveland after Saturday's 1 p.m. game between Cleveland and Providence — the Monsters lost 3-2 in overtime — so he could drive to Detroit for his son's travel hockey game.

When the Monsters have late-morning practices at their facility in Strongsville, Ohio, Smith is out the door of his home in Dublin, Ohio — a Columbus suburb — by 5:45 a.m. in order to beat the traffic and arrive well ahead of practice.

"I've been all over Ohio highways," Smith said. "So far, no (speeding) tickets."

He even talks like a full-fledged Ohioan: "What's with all the semis driving in the left lane?!"

Smith has been a big addition for the Monsters, especially when defenseman Daemon Hunt, who was expected to play a substantial role, was claimed on waivers by the Minnesota Wild just before the season started. He's been playing with first-year AHLer Guillaume Richard on the Monsters' top defensive pair, playing sizable minutes and killing penalties. In seven games, he has zero points, four penalty minutes and a minus-3 rating for a Cleveland team that has had trouble scoring.

Smith is putting in work off the ice, too. Vogelhuber raved about his play, but also how open he's been to bringing along Cleveland's young players. NHL veterans who have made \$40 million during their careers may not always have been so open.

"It's such a positive situation," Vogelhuber said. "He's really an example to so many guys in our room of what it means to be an NHL player, a leader. They gravitate toward him, absolutely."

Vogelhuber and Smith have known each other for almost two decades.

Vogelhuber played with Smith's younger brother, current Vegas Golden Knights forward Reilly Smith, at Miami University, and he met Brendan way back around 2009 or 2010. Fast-forward 16 years, and Vogelhuber is Brendan Smith's coach.

"There's a little bit of weird there, yeah," Smith said, smiling. "My brother has laughed about him being my coach now, but it's not as weird as you'd think. The thing is, I'm closer to management's age and the coaching staff's age than I am to the boys (in the dressing room). Like, by a mile. After games, the guys are getting together and, for me, it's like, 'I kinda wanna hang out with *those* guys.'"

But mentoring the young players is one of his favorite parts of the job.

"I've made it a point to go get dinner with them and hang out away from the rink when I'm able," Smith said. "They pick the spots and I take them to dinner."

Smith talks glowingly about how surprised he's been by how much he loves living in the area. Nothing is settled, but it sounds like he'd be willing to make it a permanent home.

For now, it's a day-to-day existence.

"The longer this goes, the harder it will get, because commuting is an issue," Smith said. "I still think I can play in the NHL. If that's how the stars align, that's great. If not, well, that's how the cookie crumbles."

Item No. 3: Snacks

- The Blue Jackets were hoping defenseman Erik Gudbranson (hip) would be ready to play when they return home, but it might be a little longer. Waddell told *The Athletic* that Gudbranson, who is traveling with the club on this lengthy road trip, has started skating and is making progress toward a return. But the best guess is that he's back early next week — the Jackets host the Montreal Canadiens on Monday, Nov. 17 — or during the four-game road trip that starts just after.
- Olivier's game misconduct for his major boarding penalty on Vancouver defenseman Elias Pettersson on Saturday was the first game misconduct of his 264-game career with the Blue Jackets and Nashville. He was assessed a game misconduct earlier this season for a hit vs. Washington's Declan Chisholm, but the game misconduct was expunged from his record by the league the following day. This one's not going away, apparently.
- My, how times have changed in the NHL: most agree Olivier is the league's toughest fighter, but he's played parts of seven seasons in the NHL and is only now getting a game misconduct. The heavyweight champs from yesteryear collected them like cufflinks. Tim Hunter is the NHL's all-time leader with 40, followed by Tiger Williams (36), Marty McSorley (33) and Bob Probert (33).
- Olivier's penalty occurred at 7:00 of the second period, with the Canucks and Blue Jackets tied at 1. He was also given a major penalty for boarding, putting Vancouver on a five-minute power play. The Blue Jackets' beleaguered penalty kill was tremendous, allowing only three shots on goal from 38, 52 and 63 feet away from goaltender Elvis Merzlikins' net.
- We asked the NHL stats department for the Blue Jackets' all-time record killing five-minute majors. They've killed 14 of 24 (58.3 percent). The last successful five-minute kill for the Blue Jackets was exactly six years ago Sunday, when Nick Foligno was called for charging after he landed his right elbow into the head of Colorado Avalanche forward Pierre-Edouard Bellemare on Nov. 9, 2019, a 4-2 Columbus loss.
- Cole Sillinger, still only 22 years old, played in his 300th NHL game on Saturday. He doesn't turn 23 until May 16.
- With analyst Jody Shelley stepping away from the club on Monday to be part of Amazon's NHL coverage, Blue Jackets senior adviser and alternate governor John Davidson will step back into the broadcast booth with play-by-play voice Steve Mears on Monday when the Jackets play in Edmonton. Davidson, a Hockey Hall of Fame broadcaster, joined Mears several times last season, too.

- This week's Monday Gathering trivia question: Olivier's game misconduct was a career first. But which Blue Jackets player earned the most game misconducts during his Columbus career? (Hint: he earned one in his first NHL game.)

- Waddell and much of his staff attended the Michigan State vs. Penn State game on Friday in East Lansing, giving him a chance to see two of the club's three first-round picks over the past two years. Center Cayden Lindstrom, No. 4 overall in 2024, is a freshman at Michigan State, while defenseman Jackson Smith, No. 14 in June, is a freshman at Penn State. Waddell watched Smith and the Nittany Lions play last weekend in Columbus. This was his first in-person look at Lindstrom this season.

- Here's Waddell on Lindstrom, who missed almost all of last season recovering from back surgery: "He had four really good scoring chances, and he can't score right now. He's getting frustrated, I can tell. He can really skate, though. He split the D one time, using his size and speed and strength. He's very involved. I liked what I saw there."

Waddell said Lindstrom has continued to progress in his recovery and has started working with weights. "He couldn't do weights for a long time, and they've got him on a really good program now. They're really happy with him."

- Trivia answer: Jared Boll had six game misconducts, the most in franchise history. Jody Shelley was close behind with four, followed by Brandon Dubinsky with three. Boll's NHL debut — Oct. 5, 2007 — ended at 16:20 of the second period when he was given a major for elbowing and a game misconduct after a mid-ice hit on Anaheim's Travis Moen.

The Athletic / Blue Jackets fall to Canucks despite big nights from Kirill Marchenko, Dmitri Voronkov

By Aaron Portzline – November 10, 2025

No matter how coach Dean Evason scrambles his forward lines, the Columbus Blue Jackets have only two forwards who can put the puck in the net right now: wingers Kirill Marchenko and Dmitri Voronkov.

That's no recipe for success in the NHL, especially on the road.

In a back-and-forth game between two desperate clubs in the Blue Jackets and the Vancouver Canucks, Brock Boeser scored the go-ahead goal with 5:45 remaining, sending the host Canucks to a 4-3 win over Columbus before 18,763 in Rogers Arena.

The Blue Jackets, who had come back from 1-0 and 3-2 deficits, had a chance to tie it late, but their power play — 0-for-4 on the night — once again failed them, even with goaltender Elvis Merzlikins pulled for an extra skater (six-on-four).

It marked Columbus' fifth straight loss (0-4-1) in Vancouver and its third straight loss overall.

The Blue Jackets wasted big nights by Marchenko and Voronkov, who played on a newly comprised line with center Adam Fantilli. Both Marchenko (2-1-3) and Voronkov (1-2-3) had three-point nights.

It wasn't a poor outing for the Blue Jackets, not by a long shot. However, they continue to make critical mistakes at critical moments — Boeser's breakaway in the closing minutes of a 3-3 game — and they don't have enough players contributing offensively.

"I felt like tonight we just kept the puck moving," Blue Jackets defenseman Zach Werenski told FanDuel Sports Network after the game. "We got to the blue paint. We got a lot of chances around their net.

"But, you know, our best players have to get going. Some guys have to step up. I need to score; it can't just be Marchy and Voro every time. I liked a lot about our game, but I have to bear down and find a way to get wins."

Marchenko leads the Blue Jackets with eight goals, while Voronkov has seven. The only other forward with more than two goals is veteran winger Miles Wood, who was acquired this summer to play on the fourth line but has moved up to the second due to his production.

Evason was more peeved by the Blue Jackets' defensive lapses, especially the late gaffe that led to Boeser's goal.

The Blue Jackets were pushing so hard for their own go-ahead goal — Marchenko had tied it five minutes earlier — and they ended up leaving themselves exposed when the puck was turned over to the Canucks.

Vancouver forward Kiefer Sherwood, who grew up in Columbus, sprung Boeser for a breakaway. His shot got a piece of goaltender Elvis Merzlikins' glove, but dropped into the net.

"We have to keep teaching and recognizing that, you know, when we've got an even hockey game at that stage, there's no chance anyone should be getting in behind us for any type of a breakaway," Evason said. "Like, I just don't ... we'll have to talk to some individuals and figure out what we're thinking in that situation, if we are thinking.

"That was a key point in the game where we just need to, you know, hang around and wait for our opportunity. We push a little bit for offensive and consequently it ends up in our net."

The Blue Jackets fell behind only 5:28 in the game, but made it 1-1 just over a minute later when Marchenko scored off the rush.

With the score tied 1-1 well into the second, Blue Jackets winger Mathieu Olivier was given a five-minute major for boarding when he caught Vancouver defenseman Elias Pettersson square in the back with a hard hit along the end boards.

The call was allowed to stand as a major after a review, and Olivier was given a game misconduct, ending his night and forcing the Jackets to play with 11 forward for the final 33 minutes.

For a while, this felt like a positive turning point for the Blue Jackets, who have struggled mightily on the penalty kill this season. They wiped off the entire Canucks' five-minute power play, allowing only three shots on goal, all of them from the outside.

That kill seemed to lift the Blue Jackets.

Only 1:02 later, Columbus made it 2-1 on Voronkov's sixth of the season off a rebound in front of Vancouver goaltender Kevin Lankinen. However, the Canucks scored late in the second to tie it and early in the third to take the lead.

The Blue Jackets made it 3-3 at 9:47 of the third, and it looked like they might be en route to a crucial road point.

But they couldn't close it.

The Blue Jackets were looking for a more spirited, direct effort after losing back-to-back games to the New York Islanders and the Calgary Flames to start this season-long five-game road trip.

Evason didn't just put his forward lines in a blender; he pushed "liquify."

Three of the four lines were changed, with only the third line — center Charlie Coyle, with wingers Cole Sillinger and Olivier — spared.

Among the biggest changes:

- Fantilli replaced veteran Sean Monahan on the No. 1 line between Voronkov and Marchenko, with Monahan dropping to the second line

- Captain Boone Jenner was dropped from the second line to the fourth line
- Center Luca Del Bel Belluz, up from AHL Cleveland on Thursday, made his season debut on the fourth line with Jenner and Yegor Chinakhov
- Isac Lundestrom and Zach Aston-Reese were both healthy scratches

The Athletic / Blue Jackets' first month brings streak and a learning curve: Thoughts, critiques and more

By Aaron Portzline – November 8, 2025

The Columbus Blue Jackets are in a tough stretch right now. Beginning with Wednesday's loss on Long Island, the Blue Jackets play nine out of 12 games on the road, changing time zones five times in a five-game stretch (New York Islanders, Calgary Flames, Vancouver Canucks, Edmonton Oilers, Seattle Kraken).

Through the first month of the season, they've both surged and lurched. Here's six thoughts on the striving but not quite thriving Blue Jackets so far:

They don't dictate

There aren't many games where the Blue Jackets are completely overmatched or completely mail it in (often those two are mistaken for each other). The Jackets had their doors blown off by the Colorado Avalanche on Oct. 16, but they've been in every other game this season.

But the best teams don't just hang around. They dictate how the game is going to be played. They set the pace of the play, the level of physical engagement, etc. Home or road, day or night, you know what you're getting when you play the NHL's elite teams.

The Blue Jackets can play with anybody in this league, which should excite longtime fans who have been through all of the ups and downs (mostly downs) this franchise has provided. This is a really good club.

But the next frontier for them is to become a club that sets the rules of engagement, rather than react or respond to those established by the opponent.

More physicality needed

This may be an extension of the first category — and a preview of the third, for that matter.

The Blue Jackets have often played their best games when emotions run high. Given their roster composition — leading with third-line winger Mathieu Olivier — they should not fear any other team in the league. But it doesn't always hurt to play the Blue Jackets. One aspect that's been missing through the 7-6-0 start is their play in front of the nets. Yes, plural.

In the offensive zone, I don't see nearly enough traffic in front of the goaltender, not enough greasy goals. And it's the same on the other end, where they aren't quite nasty enough to visitors in front of their goalie.

It's not fair to single one person out. This is on everybody. But Dmitri Voronkov's lack of physicality is, frankly, surprising. The 6-foot-5, 227-pound forward is quick to stand up for teammates, absolutely. He doesn't mind taking a hit to make a play, either. But when you consider how his reputation preceded

him to the NHL, and how he played out of the gates in his NHL debut ... where is that guy? He's been an impressive goal-scorer so far. But the nasty edge isn't a regular part of his game.

Work before skill

This might be the most skilled roster the Blue Jackets have ever put together, particularly at forward. Yegor Chinakhov would have been a fixture in the top-line and on the power play in most of this franchise's seasons, but he can't crack the top six — or even the lineup — most nights.

But look at the best teams in this league: the Florida Panthers (when healthy), Vegas Golden Knights, Colorado Avalanche, Carolina Hurricanes, Winnipeg Jets, etc. They all have exceptional skill. Scoring, skating, playmaking ... you could go up and down their rosters and marvel. But what has elevated those franchises to the next level is how hard they play, how physically demanding they make it to match their pace.

That loss to Colorado on Oct. 16? That was the issue. Not that the Avalanche have more skill than the Blue Jackets (which they do), but that they completely overwhelmed the Blue Jackets with their pace and energy right from the jump.

The Blue Jackets haven't been guilty of taking many off nights this season. But they were jumped by the Islanders on Sunday and the Flames on Wednesday. The more mature this roster gets, the fewer times that should happen.

Do they need a star?

Many times during Rick Nash's career, it was surmised that the Blue Jackets needed a second stallion — a player who could take the heat off No. 61 a few nights each season.

With this forward group, I wonder if it's not the opposite. This seed was first planted by former Blue Jackets coach Dave King, one of the most respected minds in hockey, who was in town last month as part of the franchise's 25th anniversary celebration.

King looked at the roster and surmised (I'm summarizing): "They need a forward."

As noted above, the Blue Jackets are a very talented, highly skilled group. Kirill Marchenko is an elite talent. Adam Fantilli is the two-way center this franchise has always sought. Kent Johnson, Voronkov, Sean Monahan, Boone Jenner, Charlie Coyle ... these are all proven, established veterans.

But I wonder if this roster needs a sun for all of the other forwards to orbit. In other words, when the going gets rough, where does the line form for the guys? Who is their Matthew Tkachuk? Their Nathan MacKinnon? Their Jack Eichel? Not generational talents, necessarily, but of equivalent importance to the club.

Is it Marchenko? It might be, as of early this season. Is it Fantilli? It might be within the next year or two, although he's off to only a so-so start this season. I would argue that it's Jenner, the captain, or Monahan, on most nights.

For now, that's fine. But keep an eye on this the rest of the season and beyond. And if Waddell doesn't see anybody emerge who is worthy of the mantle, that might be his biggest target as this club's GM.

Dress Chinakhov

The Blue Jackets are 6-2-0 when Yegor Chinakhov plays. They're 1-4-0 when he's a healthy scratch. That's not on all on Chinakhov, of course, but it's interesting.

Put him in the lineup. Play him. Chinakhov looks like a 20-plus goal talent and a "plus" skater, which every club in the NHL could use, including Columbus.

Don't play Chinakhov

... it feels as if the Blue Jackets, for now, are stuck on the third option.

I get that Dean Evason is looking for four lines he feels comfortable playing in any situation, and for a while — a four-game winning streak that ended on Sunday — it was hard to argue with the results. Chinakhov was in the lineup then, too, although in a fourth-line role.

More than the immediate impact Chinakhov could provide, it feels as if over time, the Blue Jackets are going to damage their asset. That's never a good thing, and this franchise has done it over and over.

This is going to be fun

The critiques listed above are in no way damning. The Blue Jackets are on the right path toward having a multi-year run of really good teams and playoff berths. The rebuild was painful and lengthy, but you've got a club now, Columbus.

I wondered what message was being sent from the front office to the dressing room this summer with the limited moves they made. The only significant changes were to the third and fourth lines, and so far Miles Wood and Charlie Coyle have been solid additions.

To me, that's why Evason has been intent on mixing up his defensive pairs and forward lines. He's wanted to avoid players coming into this season with a comfort level that their roles from last season are part of their contracts.

There's a long way to go and a lot of fascinating developments for the Blue Jackets, but this is a competitive, proud team with an interesting mix of veterans and young forwards, skill and grit — and the goaltending has been better than anybody expected.

I still don't think they've found their gears yet. But it's coming.

The Columbus Dispatch / Mistakes costly for Columbus Blue Jackets in loss to Vancouver Canucks: Takeaways

Brian Hedger – November 10, 2025

Mistakes and missed opportunities have put the Blue Jackets into a three-game slide, including a 4-3 loss Nov. 8 against the Vancouver Canucks at Rogers Arena.

Eight days earlier, the Blue Jackets (7-7-0) outlasted the St. Louis Blues 3-2 in Columbus to win their fourth straight game before flying to New York the same night for a quick turnaround against the Islanders on Nov. 2 at UBS Arena.

A loss on two New York goals in the game's final 67 seconds started a slide, which includes a 5-1 loss Nov. 5 in Calgary. All three opponents had middling records or worse, but the Jackets found ways to lose without gaining a point.

Next is a road back-to-back Nov. 11 against the Edmonton Oilers and Nov. 12 against the Seattle Kraken. The Oilers, who have finished as Stanley Cup runner-up the past two seasons, are off to a slow start and lost 9-1 to the Colorado Avalanche on Nov. 8 for their worst margin of defeat on home ice.

They're led by Connor McDavid and Leon Draisaitl, arguably the two best players in the world, so the Blue Jackets' plight only gets tougher.

Here are the Blue Jackets' takeaways from Vancouver:

Columbus Blue Jackets sloppy on Vancouver Canucks' winning goal

Prior to Brock Boeser's winner for the Canucks, all three Blue Jackets forwards on the top line were caught drifting below the faceoff dots in the offensive zone when Lukas Reichel zipped a quick rim up the boards on the left wing to Kiefer Sherwood.

Dmitri Voronkov had his stick ripped out of his hands after getting tangled with defenseman Marcus Pettersson along the right-wing boards, but nothing was called. Reichel's rim pass to Kiefer Sherwood slid right past him, as Kirill Marchenko dipped just below the dot in the right circle and Adam Fantilli skated behind the Canucks' net.

Boeser did the rest, slipping behind Blue Jackets defenseman Ivan Provorov and controlling Sherwood's diagonal saucer pass by knocking it out of mid-air to his feet on the fly. His shot skipped off Elvis Merzlikins' glove and into the net with the Jackets' goalie set up outside of his crease.

The whole play was poorly executed, and the Canucks took full advantage to score the winning goal. That stings even worse for the Blue Jackets just two games after losing at the Islanders on two late goals.

Columbus Blue Jackets jumble forward lines against Vancouver Canucks

After getting scorched Nov. 5 by the Flames, owners of the NHL's worst record, Blue Jackets coach Dean Evason made changes to three of his four lines.

Charlie Coyle's line with Cole Sillinger and Mathieu Olivier was the only one that wasn't reconfigured during practice Nov. 7 in Vancouver, and even they broke up after Olivier was ejected 7:00 into the second on a major boarding penalty.

The biggest changes were Fantilli moving up to center Marchenko and Voronkov on the top line, Sean Monahan sliding to the second line to center Miles Wood and Kent Johnson, who moved back up to that group after skating on the fourth line in Calgary, and captain Boone Jenner moving from the second line to the fourth.

Rookie Luca Del Bel Belluz centered Jenner's line in his season debut and Yegor Chinakhov skated with them at right wing. The moves worked great for the reworked first line, which produced all three of the Jackets' goals, but Fantilli, Marchenko and Voronkov were also on the ice for Boeser's winning goal.

Mathieu Olivier's major penalty put Columbus Blue Jackets in a tough spot

Mathieu Olivier isn't a dirty player, and the hit that got him ejected 7:00 into the second period wasn't dirty either. It was, however, illegal and might draw a call from the NHL's department of player safety on Nov. 10.

This is Olivier's second major penalty on a late hit in 14 games, following an elbowing major while finishing a check against Washington Capitals defenseman Declan Chisholm on Oct. 24 at Nationwide Arena.

The Capitals scored two power-play goals to blow open a 5-1 victory in the third period, but the Canucks weren't able to score with a five-minute power play following Olivier's hit on defenseman Elias Pettersson.

Killing all five minutes off without allowing a goal gave the Blue Jackets a boost, but that doesn't get Olivier off the hook. It was a poor decision with the puck nowhere near Pettersson, whose head slammed off the glass, and a bad penalty to take the next shift after Marchenko's first of two goals tied it 1-1.

Olivier's early departure with a game misconduct forced the Blue Jackets to play the final 43 minutes with only 11 forwards and without their leader in hits and fights.

Vancouver Canucks forward Kiefer Sherwood haunts Columbus Blue Jackets again

Sherwood continued a career trend of making life miserable for the Blue Jackets, whom he grew up cheering for along with younger brother, Kole, while they grew up in New Albany. His pass to Boeser was Sherwood's first assist and 10th point of the season to go with a team-leading nine goals.

Both Sherwood brothers played for the Ohio AAA Blue Jackets Tier I developmental program as teens, and each has a spot among a group of seven OBJ alumni who've played NHL games.

He's one of four OBJ alums playing in the NHL, along with former Blue Jackets center Sean Kuraly (Boston Bruins), former Blue Jackets forward Jack Roslovic (Edmonton Oilers) and Chicago Blackhawks defenseman Connor Murphy.

This was the 10th time the elder Sherwood has faced the Blue Jackets, and he increased his stat line to seven points on two goals and five assists. Sherwood, a pending unrestricted free agent, ranks second in the NHL with 70 hits.

The Columbus Dispatch / Columbus Blue Jackets drop third straight game on late stumble against Vancouver Canucks

By Brian Hedger – November 9, 2025

The Blue Jackets lost their third straight game Nov. 8 at the Vancouver Canucks, 4-3, because they can't shake their two biggest issues.

They can't seem to beat a goalie with anybody other than Kirill Marchenko or Dmitri Voronkov, and they're now crumbling in tight games. This time, despite outshooting the Canucks 32-25, the Jackets let another golden chance to win slip through their fingers when Canucks forward Brock Boeser beat goalie Elvis Merzlikins off a rush with 5:45 left to play.

That broke a 3-3 tie less than five minutes after Marchenko pulled the Blue Jackets (7-7-0) even with his second goal of the game and team leading eighth of the season.

Skating with Fantilli at center instead of Sean Monahan, Marchenko and Voronkov excelled in the offensive zone. Their impressive performance just wasn't enough to edge the Canucks (8-8-0), who got goals in the third from Conor Garland at 6:17 and Boeser at 14:15.

The Blue Jackets got a late power play, trailing by a goal, but failed to score before Yegor Chinakhov was called for tripping off a faceoff at the end of it. Kevin Lankinen, who started in net for Vancouver, made stops against Voronkov and Marchenko in the final 2:19 among his 29 saves, improving to 9-3-1 in 14 career appearances against Columbus.

Elvis Merzlikins (21 saves) started for the Blue Jackets and dropped to 4-3-0 with his second straight loss decided late in the third period.

Columbus successfully killed a five-minute Canucks power play in the second that started 7:00 into the period after Mathieu Olivier was assessed a boarding major and game misconduct for driving defenseman Elias Pettersson headfirst into end boards in the Vancouver zone.

It happened 14 seconds into a shift that followed Marchenko's first goal of the game to tie 1-1 at 6:46 of the second and counter Jake DeBrust's goal for the Canucks at 5:28 that opened the scoring. Voronkov put the Blue Jackets up 2-1 with 6:58 left in the middle period, but Drew O'Connor tied it 2-2 with 57 seconds remaining.

Vancouver went ahead 3-2 at 6:17 of the third on a rebound goal by Garland, but Marchenko's second of the game tied it 3-3 just 3:30 later.

Cleveland.com / Blue Jackets recall center from Monsters, place veteran defenseman on IR

By Sports Staff – November 6, 2025

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Columbus Blue Jackets have recalled forward Luca Del Bel Belluz from their American Hockey League affiliate, the Cleveland Monsters, and placed defenseman Erik Gudbranson on injured reserve, the team announced.

According to Blue Jackets President of Hockey Operations and General Manager Don Waddell, Gudbranson was placed on injured reserve due to a hip injury, with the move being retroactive to October 27.

Del Bel Belluz, 21, has been a standout for the Monsters this season, leading the team in scoring with three goals and two assists in seven games. The 2022 second-round draft pick of the Blue Jackets has appeared in 16 career NHL games with Columbus, recording three goals and six assists.

The 6-foot-1 forward was selected to participate in the 2025 AHL All-Star Classic but missed the event due to his recall to the Blue Jackets. In 126 career AHL games with Cleveland, Del Bel Belluz has tallied 39 goals and 50 assists.

Gudbranson, 33, has played in four games for the Blue Jackets this season. The veteran defenseman has 137 points and 851 penalty minutes in 809 career NHL games. Since joining Columbus prior to the 2022-23 season, Gudbranson has recorded 43 points in 168 contests.

The Blue Jackets continue their Western Canada road trip on Saturday when they travel to Vancouver to face the Canucks. The team might also not have center Sean Monahan available as he was injured in Wednesday night's 5-1 loss to the Flames in Calgary.

Aaron Portzline of The Athletic reported on Thursday morning that the team doesn't expect Monahan's injury to be serious.